ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A signal representing variably coded information, *i.e.*, information that is coded according to a code selected from a set of codes, is received at a first station. The received signal is decoding according to respective codes of the set of codes to generate respective likelihood metrics associated with respective codes of the set of codes. A code is selected

5   from the set of codes based on the respective likelihood metrics, wherein the selection of the code from the set of codes is biased based on a prior communication between the first station and a second station that transmitted the signal. The received signal is the decoded according to the selected code to generate an estimate of the information. According to another embodiment, a signal representing a first variably code field and a second field that indicates

10   the code applied to the first field, is received and processed to generate an estimate of the second field. Based on a confidence in the generated estimate of the second field, the receiving station either identifies the code applied to the first field based solely on the generated estimate of the second field, or identifies the code applied to the first field based on the generated estimate of the second field and respective likelihood metrics associated with

15   decoding the received signal according to respective codes of the set of codes. In still another embodiment, an extent to which to partially decode a received variably coded signal to identify the code applied to the signal is determined based on a prior communication between the receiving station and a station that transmitted the signal.